

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

S E C R E T STATE 193821

EXDIS

FOL TEL SENT NIACT IMMEDIATE WASHDC 27 SEPT 73
FROM BANGKOK REPEATED TO YOU

QTE S E C R E T BANGKOK 15169

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS : MARR, TH

SUBJECT : WITHDRAWAL OF STRATEGIC FORCES (U)

REF: A. BANGKOK 13782

B. BANGKOK 14037

C. SECDEF 8170

D. BANGKOK 14495

E. BANGKOK 15093

1. AS RESULT OF FIRST PHASE WITHDRAWALS, OUR EFFORTS
TO BRING THAI ALONG WITH US, AND STRONG SUPPORT BY
HIGH LEVEL VISITORS FROM WASHINGTON, RTG HAS FOR THE
MOMENT RELAXED PRESSURE FOR FURTHER US FORCE REDUCTIONS (REF D).
WE HAVE FELT WE COULD HOLD THIS LINE WITH RTG,
BUT TOTALLY UNEXPECTED NEWS REGARDING B-52 REDEPOLYMENTS
FROM GUAM (REF C) IS LIKELY TO REVIVE THE ISSUE,GENERATE
SECRET

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NEW PRESSURES ON PRIME MINISTER, AND ALSO RAISE QUESTIONS
REGARDING US SINCERITY AND INTENTIONS. RTG KNOWS WE PULLED 15
B-52'S OUT OF GUAM LAST MONTH, AND HAS FOUND IT DIFFICULT
TO ACCEPT WHY AT LEAST SOME COULD NOT HAVE BEEN WITHDRAWN

FROM UTAPAO.

2. OUR MAIN PITCH TO THE RTG HAS BEEN THAT REDUCTION OF OUR STRATEGIC FORCES AT THIS PARTICULAR TIME WOULD GIVE WRONG SIGNAL TO HANOI AND REDUCE DETERRENT EFFECT OF OUR FRCES.IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR THAI TO UNDERSTAND WHY, IF THIS IS TRUE REGARDING US FORCES IN THAILAND, SAME CRITERIA DO NOT ALSO APPLY TO US FORCES ON GUAM.

3. PRIME MINISTER THANOM DID NOT RAISE QUESTION OF B-52'S OR US FORCE LEVELS WITH GENERAL VOGT SEPTEMBER 26 (REF E), AND SUBJECT HAS DROPPED FROM FRONT PAGES AFTER MONTHS OF HEADLINE STORIES. HOWEVER, THANOM HAS PERSONALLY ASSOCIATED HIMSELF WITH THE RTG DEMAND FOR REDUCTION OF B-52'S IN THAILAND, WHICH WAS PRESENTED AS FORMAL RTG REQUEST AT LAST FORCE LEVEL NEGOTIATIONS SEPTEMBER 4 (REF A). UNILATERAL US DECISION AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF B-52 MOVEMENTS FROM WEST PACIFIC AREAS OTHER THAN THAILAND, WITHOUT AT VERY LEAST HAVING GIVEN RTG LEADERSHIP CONVINCING ARGUMENT WHY WITHDRAWAL OF B-52'S FROM GUAM DO NOT RISK SAME DANGERS WE HAVE PORTRAYED IN WITHDRAWALS FROM THAILAND, MAY WELL APPEAR TO THAI AS CALCULATED DISREGARD OF CONCERNS AND FORMAL REQUEST THEY HAVE CLEARLY EXPRESSED TO US.

4. BELIEVE BEST WAY TO AVOID DANGER OF SETTING IN MOTION SERIES OF EVENTS WHICH COULD EASILY RESTRICT OUR ABILITY TO KEEP HERE THE BASIC FORCES WE REQUIRE OVER THE LONGER RUN WOULD BE TO AUTHORIZE US ASAP TO INFORM THAI THAT US IS PREPARED TO REDEPLOY TDY B-52'S AND KC-135'S (ONLY 8 AND 4 AIRCRAFT RESPECTIVELY) FROM UTAPAO TO GUAM AS SOON AS FORMAL RTG AGREEMENT CAN BE ASSURED OR BY SOME SPECIFIED FUTURE DATE; WE WOULD TELL THAI THAT IN THE MEANTIME WE ARE ANNOUNCING REDEPLOYMENT OF B-52 AIRCRAFT FROM GUAM WHICH WILL MAKE ROOM FOR PLANES NOW BASED IN THAILAND. TO AVOID PROBLEMS WE FORESEE, THIS WOULD OF COURSE HAVE TO BE WORKED OUT WITH RTG BEFORE RPT BEFORE WITHDRAWALS FROM GUAM ARE ANNOUNCED. PLEASE ADVISE
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